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ABSTRACT

Basic ways in which standards are generated and/or applied in developing professions are identified. Analysis of six sociologically defined characteristics of professions yields six generalized roles standards play in the establishment, development and maintenance of occupations as professions. The six central characteristics are: (1) definite, essential social service; (2) special, elaborate conceptual base; (3) extended special training; (4) autonomy and personal responsibility in practice; (5) dedication to clients over personal gain; and (6) identity, protection, and enforcement through a specialized organization. In turn, standards operate in legitimating the social value of occupations; establishing the credibility and authority of conceptual bases of practice; determining the adequacy of training programs and the qualifications of trainees; defining the boundaries of expert authority and professional responsibility; defining the conditions of faithful service to clients; and defining common values which underlie organizational identity, protection, and enforcement. These generalized roles are applied to practices in educational evaluation to raise fundamental questions about the possibility and desirability of professionalizing educational evaluation. (Author/GK)

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Standards and the Development of Professions: Implications for Educational Evaluation[1]

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Introduction

Any title which suggests that educational evaluation is, could be, or should be a profession will be met by hoots of derision from some, yawns of indifference from others, and applause of approval from still others. However, this paper is not intended to strike a blow for either approval or disapproval. Instead, it is intended as a scenario, an outline of a speculative plot of consequences of treating education evaluation as if it were or could be a profession.

To develop the scenario, I will first consider briefly the nature of professions and standards, then describe a number of ways in which standards affect the development of occupations into professions, and, finally, examine some of the ways in which standards could affect prospects for professionalizing educational evaluation. Here, frankly, I am more interested in raising questions about educational evaluation than in making particular recommendations about its future practice.

Of course, the scenario is not entirely hypothetical; the stage is already set and some of the cast is assembled. There are people, after all, who call themselves "educational evaluators" and are employed by others to do whatever

[1]Professors James Bosco and Robert Travers of Western Michigan University kindly responded to an earlier draft of this paper. While I have benefitted from their incisive comments, they bear no responsibility for the final form or content of the work.

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educational evaluators do. There are organizations which feature educational evaluation as their reason for being and publications which treat educational evaluation as a special subject matter. There are special programs in place to train educational evaluators, and a special set of standards to guide evaluation of educational programs has been developed and is soon to be published. Last, some people (mostly educational evaluators themselves, I suspect) talk about the "profession of educational evaluation" and refer to evaluators as "professionals". If the name can bring the game, then the scenario to follow is far from idle speculation.

The Nature of Professions

"Professions," in the sense in which most social theorists use the word, are more than just full-time activities, or activities for which payment is received, as everyday usage might have it. They are occupations which are given a special position of prestige and confidence in society because certain characteristics of those occupations place special demands upon practitioners.

Although their definitions differ in particulars, social theorists tend to agree on a cluster of characteristics that marks full professions (cf. Carr-Saunders, 1955; Etzioni, 1969; Larson, 1977; Lieberman, 1956; Moore, 1970; and NMC, 1953). In general an occupation is treated as a full profession if it: (1) provides a definite, essential social service, (2) depends upon a special, elaborate conceptual base which requires practitioners to make variable decisions, (3) requires an extended period of special training, (4) calls for broad autonomy and personal responsibility in judgment and action, (5) emphasizes faithful service to clients over personal gain to practitioners as the basis for practice, and (6) is supported by an organized community of practitioners which protects the rights and enforces the responsibilities of practitioners.

This is the sense in which I will use the word 'profession' here, and these are the characteristics I want to consider in examining the place of standards in the development of professions. Before that, however, one other preliminary semantic matter needs to be mentioned--a definition of the word 'standard'.

The Nature of Standards. The term 'standard', too, is somewhat ambiguous. Used as an adjective, the word sometimes implies no more than "what is usual or ordinary", e.g., a meal that is "standard fare." At other times, it suggests "what is archetypal, or characteristic of a type", a standard football field is 100 yards long. As a noun, however, the word usually implies "a criterion of value, an ideal", e.g., a novel or movie sets a standard -- establishes an ideal. Then at times, we talk about "personal standards", indicating that standards may be individual and unique; but at other times, we talk about standards as if they must be social and shared, e.g., the standards established by the Bureau of Standards.

Here I intend to use the word 'standard' to mean a shared or common criterion of value--a social ideal. In this sense, standards, which may or may not be codified, are shared bases of evaluation. With this understanding in mind, we move on to consider the characteristics of full professions, noting ways in which the development of professions involves the recognition and application of shared ideals or standards.

Standards in the Development of Professions

Standards, we will see, enter the development and acceptance of occupations as professions in a number of ways. To be accepted as a profession, an occupation must meet certain standards of a society or, at least, its dominant members (Goode, 1957, p. 196, and Larson, 1977, pp. xii-xv). To develop an occupation as a profession, practitioners must form a community of interest with common standards (Goode, 1957; Moore, 1970, pp. 5-8; Wilensky, 1964, p. 141). To enter a profession,

candidates must demonstrate that they accept the standards of the profession (Larson, 1977, pp. 47-48). What is more, once an occupation is recognized as a profession, practitioners may set out to reform the standards by which society (or its dominant members) judge the occupation and its competitors (Larson, 1977, pp. xii-xiii). These and related roles of standards in the development of professions will become clearer as we examine the relationship of standards to each of the characteristics of full professions.

Standards and Definite, Essential Social Services

Service. The very idea of social service presupposes social good; one "serves" who benefits, not harms, society. The American Psychological Association's Ethical Standards of Psychologists begins bluntly, "the worth of a profession is measured by its contribution to the welfare of man" (Etziony, 1973, pp. 125-26). To be accepted as a profession, an occupation must be seen to contribute to the well-being of society; it must meet standards of social goodness.

However, standards of what is good for society may change from time to time. Thus, the National Manpower Council (1953) noted that "the history of the professions . . . reflects changes in society's evaluations of certain occupations. Thus if astrology had the same function and significance today that it did in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, its highly skilled practitioners would be given professional status" (p. 38). Moreover, especially in a pluralistic society, competing standards may exist side-by-side, so that what one group sees to be socially beneficial another may see to be socially trivial, if not harmful.

The possibility of change in standards and the coexistence of competing standards may be reflected in the development of professions in two ways. First, professions may institutionalize social biases as universal standards of social well-being. If, as some theorists have claimed, occupations achieve special status and power under the sponsorship of dominant elites or ruling classes (Larson, 1977,

pp. xii-xv), then professionalization is a politically charged process of establishing the (usually conservative) ideals of social well-being held by dominant elites or classes.

Second, once an occupation has acquired sufficient prestige and power, practitioners may act to change the very ideals of social well-being under which they operate. Professional status, as Larson sees it, allows a group of experts to live, in part, "within ideologies of their own creation, which they present to the outside as the most valid descriptions of specific spheres of social reality" (p. xiii).

The idea of service involves standards and the potential for conflict in yet other ways. For example, some theorists argue that professions serve clients and that occupations which do not call for direct relationships with individual or corporate clients are not professions. Moore (1970) says simply that "the professional renders his expert services for clients" (p. 18; cf. Wilensky, 1965, p. 141). If service implies clients, then conflicts may arise when clients' standards differ from professional standards. In conflict situations, should the welfare of clients be judged by professional standards or by clients' (lay) standards, which may be defective according to professional standards? Do professionals have any obligation to educate clients so that clients can make informed, independent decisions? Obviously answers to these and similar questions concern clients' rights to know and to choose, but they also concern the exclusiveness and autonomy of professions.

Standards of service may be even more controversial where professionals practice as employees in corporate and institutional organizations which serve clients rather than as entrepreneurs in "private practice". There conflicts may develop among professional standards, clients' standards, and the standards of the employing organization (Etzioni, 1969, pp. xii, 1, and 15; Wilensky, 1964,

pp. 147-48). We will return to this point later.

Definite and Essential. In similar ways, standards are involved in judging that occupations are definite and essential. To be "essential", for example, an occupation must be judged to be indispensable--necessary for social well-being. To some, occupations which only embellish the culture are not vital or essential. Much as Herbert Spencer (1883) relegated the arts to "the leisure part of life" (pp. 74-75), so the sociologist Wilbert Moore (1970) would withhold professional status from "esthetic" and "expressive" activities, where "poor performance may distress the beholder, but . . . scarcely threatens his vital interests" (p. 3). Clearly standards are involved in such judgment.

To be "definite", an occupation must be distinctive and determinate. Professionalization, thus, involves defining and establishing jurisdiction over some "area in the social division of labor" (Larson, 1977, p. xii; Wilensky, 1964, p. 139). In societies marked by progressive divisions of labor and proliferation of claims to special status, standards are involved in judging which activities are so distinctive and determinate as to deserve recognition as professions, worthy of special status and power. Definition of the boundaries of occupations generates controversy, and "no occupation becomes a profession without a struggle, just as no speciality develops inside a profession without controversy" (Goode, 1960, p. 902: also Wilensky, 1964, p. 145).

In sum, to say that an occupation provides a "definite and essential social service" is to apply standards of social well-being and related standards of the distinctive merits of occupations.

Special, elaborate conceptual base

Presumably some occupations are more "intellectual" than others; practitioners in some occupations, must make variable decisions based on a developed conceptual system, in others, not. However, to classify occupations in this way is not a

value-free judgment; standards are involved in at least three ways. Standards are involved: (a) in approving the type of conceptual or ideational base which supports an occupation, (b) in evaluating the range and complexity of judgment required for practice in an occupation, and (c) in approving the adequacy of the formulation or codification of the ideas on which an occupation is based.

Type of conceptual base. To be recognized as a profession, an occupation must meet the standards by which a society (or its dominant members) distinguish among knowledge, myth, and superstition, standards which, at any given time, represent unstable tensions among mysticism, rationalism, and empiricism.

Social theorists use significantly varied terminology to refer to the conceptual or ideational bases of professions. Some specify "knowledge" (Moore, 1970, p. 6); others cite "knowledge or doctrine" (Wilensky, 1964, p. 138); others note only a "cognitive base" (Larson, 1977, Ch. 4); and still others stipulate only "intellectual techniques" (Carr-Saunders and Wilson, 1933, p. 476; Lieberman, 1956, p. 2). These differences, it seems clear, reflect theorists' reluctance to impose a priori restrictions on the conceptual bases which may support professions. If theorists accept the practices of medicine, religion, and law as full professions, as usually they do, then they must also recognize that professions can rely on different types of conceptual base. Medicine presumably emphasizes empirical generalizations; religion, supernatural principles, and law, rules.

The standards involved here, then, are the values by which members of a society judge the defensibility of alternative types of conceptual schemes as bases for activities. To be accepted as a profession, an occupation must be based on a conceptual scheme which is accepted as superior to competing schemes (Larson, 1977, Chs. 3 and 4). Larson (1977) observes that "the more a profession's particular ideology coincides with the dominant ideological structures, the more favorable

the situation is for the profession" (p. 48). Today, she notes, "the more scientific the cognitive basis, the more favorable the situation is for the profession" (p. 47).

Range and complexity. Standards are involved, too, in the evaluating the range and complexity of a conceptual basis for practice. Is it general enough in application and complex enough in structure to require extraordinary judgment in practice? When is the conceptual basis of an occupation so narrow in scope or so precisely determined that its use requires no more than routine, nearly mechanical application of unexceptional rules, and when is it broad enough and indeterminate enough to require variable and extraordinarily demanding judgment? Wilensky (1964) suggests that there is "an optimal base for professional practice--neither too vague nor too precise, too broad or too narrow" (p. 148). What distinguishes professionals from lay persons, is possession of a special, general, and complex conceptual base which requires extraordinary and variable judgment in practice. Common, general understandings are not an adequate base for professional practice.

Formulation. The special conceptual base of professional occupations may be formulated or codified or not. Formulation enhances communication and allows movement toward uniformity in ideology (Larson, Ch. 4). However, some argue that much of the power of a profession lies in "tacit knowledge"--knowledge which cannot be stated. Wilensky (1964), claims that "the expert may be defined as a man who knows so much that he can communicate only a small part of it . . . This element of tacit knowledge in the sciences and professions helps explain their achievement of exclusive jurisdiction" (p. 149). Standards are involved in evaluating the quality and extent of formulation of the conceptual bases of occupations, and controversy may develop over the extent to which they can and cannot be formulated and communicated. Such controversy can affect professions in a

number of ways. It may create antagonism between those who emphasize the centrality of theory in practice and those who emphasize "practical know-how" over theory (Larson, 1977, p. 44). It may lead to professional education which is unbalanced on the side of either theory or practical experience. It may also affect standards of admission to training and practice by exaggerating either aptitude for thecretical understanding or aptitude for practical skill.

> Larson insists that the codification of knowledge is the:
>
> main support of a professional subculture [italics in the original]. Those professions that do not have such a solid support tend, by contrast, to create and emphasize pure mannerisms (including cognitive ones, such as unnecessary jargon or unjustifiably esoteric techniques or "pseudo-paradigmatic" changes). (p. 45)

Extended, Special Training

It is hardly necessary to point out to this audience that standards are involved in judging the adequacy of education for professions. Programs are judged on the comprehensiveness and rigor with which they treat the conceptual base of occupations, on the adequacy with which they emphasize and integrate both theoretical and practical aspects of practice, on the adequacy of trainers, on the quality of students and their educational achievements, the quality of training facilities, and so on. For example, Abraham Flexner (1940), the "dutch uncle" if not the father of professional schools in this country, saw only five concerns to be conclusive of the quality of a medical school: (a) enforced admission requirements, (b) size and quality of faculty, (c) financial support, (d) the quality of facilities, especially laboratories, and (e) provision of internships with qualified teacher-supervisors. (p. 120)

Extended training is important for professionalization not only because it

provides knowledge and skill but because it provides "effectively socialized members: members, that is, who recognize a profession's hierarchy and, implicitly the criteria of success on which it is founded" (Larson, 1977, p. 47). In other words, it equips candidates for admission to practice with the standards of the profession.

In effect, when buttressed by licensure laws, training centers and their programs are gates to professional practice, and those who control training centers and programs have a major voice in occupational standards.

Autonomy and Responsibility

Professions are occupations in which practitioners are granted considerable autonomy and authority in judgment and action because of their special knowledge and skill. As a corollary, they are assigned greater responsibility for the quality of their decisions and actions.

Autonomy implies general acceptance that special knowledge and skill command jurisdiction over some defined area of practice. Responsibility then locates the place at which "the buck stops", and entails some mechanism by which professionals, uniquely qualified by their special knowledge and skill, police their own practices. Standards, quite obviously, define the boundaries of autonomy (expert authority) and, as well, the conditions of competent practice within those boundaries. Thus professional autonomy and responsibility presuppose the existence of special standards which practitioners are uniquely qualified to employ.

Professional autonomy creates social problems. In an age of increasing specialization, members of society are confronted with more and more claims to expertness by occupational groups and more and more moves by those groups to establish professional autonomy. Where these claims and moves succeed, members of society become more and more dependent on experts--effectively disenfranchised in more and more of the decisions which affect their lives. Even where lay citizens exercise

indirect control of professions through government, professional associations, acting as powerful interest groups, may overwhelm less organized citizen influence.

In a society which espouses an ideology of individual freedom and self-determination, progressive professionalization of the labor force presents special problems of jurisdiction and emphasizes the importance of public confidence in the motives of professionals.

Faithful Service to Clients

Professionals, in effect, say to their clients and to society-at-large, "You cannot or do not have standards which are appropriate to judge the quality of our work." However, professionals also trade their special knowledge and skill for social and economic rewards. Under these conditions, professionals are especially open to suspicion of acting for self-interest, and clients are peculiarly vulnerable to self-serving judgments and actions by professionals. The power of a profession and the reputation of its members depend, at least in part, on public trust that the profession and its practitioners faithfully adhere to standards of competent service over personal motives of comfort, convenience, vanity, wealth, and the like.

Codification and publication of a profession's special standards and establishment of machinery for vigorous enforcement of the code are basic conditions for public trust in a profession and the practices of its members.

Organized Community of Practitioners

Individuals may gain power and prestige through performance of an occupation, but individual achievements do not bring power and prestige to the occupation as such or to the occupational group as a whole. Only when individuals who share an occupation recognize their common interests and unite to promote them can the seed of professionalism grow. Professions depend on organizations to promote

communities of interest.

Professional organizations serve several functions. They: (a) define and formalize the scope of occupational interests, (b) legitimace and protect the distinctiveness of the occupation, (c) promote advancement of professional "knowledge" and skill, (d) promote external recognition of the authority of the occupational group, (e) define and enforce requirements for professional training, (f) control standards of admission to practice, and (g) define and enact uniform standards of competent practice. In sum, professional organizations exist to promote shared ideals--standards--and to enforce them in jurisdiction over an occupation.

The close connection between professional organizations and the establishment of communities of standards calls attention to two phenomena important to discussion of educational evaluation as a profession. For one, professional organizations promote the standardization of knowledge. They reduce the divisive influence of clusters of practitioners who identify with particular ideologies and promote identification with a de-personalized, profession-wide ideology (Larson, 1977, pp. 40-48; Goode, 1957, p. 195). In other words, they reduce the influence of occupational gurus, cults of personality, and sects; they promote collegiality based on a uniform conceptual paradigm and a common code of practice.

A second consequence of the organization of professional communities and of practitioners' "loyalty to the profession" is the likelihood of conflicts between professional interests and other interests in the society. In particular, it may lead to subordination of client interests to the welfare of the profession or the use of professional organizations to protect practitioner welfare in opposition to public interest. It may also lead to external interference in professional matters and imposition of restrictions, contrary to the standards of the profession, on the judgment and action allowed to practitioners. Legislative intrusion is an obvious

example, but so are the controls which may be imposed on professional employees in corporate or institutional settings. In these settings, as Wilensky (1964) observes,

> organizations develop their own controls; bosses, not colleagues rule--or at minimum, power is split among managers, professional experts, and lay boards of directors. The salaried professional often has neither exclusive nor final responsibility for his work; he must accept the ultimate authority of non-professionals in the assessment of both process and product. (p. 146)

Summary: Standards and Professions

This discussion of the place of standards in the development of professions can be summarized by a list of six ways in which professions depend on the application of standards.

1. A profession is legitimated by the standards by which society (or some dominant social elite) establish the social worth of occupations, even when those standards themselves are reformed by the established profession. These standards are the prevailing ideals of social well-being which establish the social worth of occupations.
2. A profession requires the application in practice of a conceptual base which meets prevailing standards of credibility and authority in ideas. These standards, too, may be reformed by an established profession, which then promotes its version as the norm to be used in evaluation competing conceptual bases.
3. A profession is an occupation which enacts standards in the design and delivery of training programs, in the approval of training facilities, in the selection of trainers and trainees, and in the certification of trainees for admission to practice.

4. A profession is an occupation in which autonomy and responsibility are based on standards which define boundaries of expert authority and competent practice within those boundaries.
5. A profession is an occupation in which success is defined by standards of faithful service to clients rather than the individual and collective interests of practitioners.
6. A profession is an occupation in which practitioners are organized to secure jurisdiction, promote acceptance of and loyalty to special standards of practice, and to enforce special standards as conditions of competent practice.

Implications for Educational Evaluation

What does all this have to say about educational evaluation? Several points come quickly to mind. First, to the extent that professionalization involves critical examination of the values which surround and direct vital human activities, it promotes philosophical inquiry. It encourages explicit clarity, if not precision and consistency, in our formulations of the common ideals by which we profess to live.

To consider the professionalization of educational evaluation is an invitation to examine philosophically the conditions under which the evaluation of education is a valuable human activity. It can be a powerful impetus to uncover, in the best traditions of philosophy of education, the prejudices we enact in education and our evaluations of it.

Second, discussion of professionalizing educational evaluation can lead us to consider the desirability of codifying the ideals we share in evaluating evaluation in education, even where the idea of assigning responsibility for evaluation to an autonomous group of experts is rejected. A code of standards, after all, might be a powerful tool for enlightening concerned citizens, increasing their under-

standing of evaluation in education and enabling them to be more critical and influential as evaluators. It might also serve as a stimulus to more focused inquiry about educational evaluation--a heuristic tool that directs attention to more clearly defined problems and controversies in evaluation and education.

Third, it should lead us to investigate the present state of practices in evaluation in education and to question closely the feasibility and desirability of placing responsibility for evaluation in the hands of specialists. To some extent this is my intention in this final section of the paper. Here I will convert my earlier conclusions about standards and professions into questions about educational evaluation in particular.

1. Does educational evaluation meet social standards in providing a definite, essential social service? At best, the answer to this complex question is mixed. From the perspective of rational social planning, the activity is at least theoretically important, and the increasing use of educational programs as means for implementing social policies has heightened its importance in practice. Educational evaluation has been mandated by law. On the other hand, numerous critics--including some evaluators and many clients--of educational evaluation projects have questioned their value (Campbell, 1976; Fox, 1978, and Macdonald, 1974). Macdonald (1974) goes so far as to claim that "evaluation is at present the major disaster area in education. It is a disaster because the tail has come to the place where it is wagging the dog" (p. 3).

However, even if it is a necessary, valuable social service, it is far from unique! Everyone can, and most do, serve as critics of educational programs. In fact, Abraham Flexner, (1940) whose early nation-wide evaluation of medical schools is a landmark example of socially momentous educational evaluation proclaimed:

> time and again it has been shown that an unfettered mind, if courageous, imaginative, and determined to master relationships, is, in the very nature of things, best suited to undertake a general survey . . . The

> expert has his place, to be sure; but if I were asked to suggest the most promising way to study legal education, I should seek a layman, not a professor of law; or for the sound way to investigate teacher training, the last person I should think of employing would be a professor of education. (p. 111)

What is more, it is far from clear that the skills involved in evaluating educational programs are uniquely applicable to education. What is involved in educational evaluation that is not involved in evaluation in general? The ease with which recognized educational evaluators draw theoretical and methodological metaphors and models from other spheres of evaluation suggest that little is unique to education.

In the same way, it is not clear that evaluation is a definite activity, distinguishable from other activities of gathering data to support or refute claims. What, we may ask, distinguishes the activities of the evaluator from the activities of others who systematically investigate educational processes and programs to reach conclusions?

2. Does educational evaluation rest on a base of ideas which meet accepted standards of credibility and legitimate authority? Here, too, the answer is mixed. Inasmuch as educational evaluation capitalizes on mathematized empirical methodology, it comforms to the scientific temper of the times and appears to offer conclusions that are justifiable on rigorous standards of evidential adequacy and, so, are credible on scientific authority. That may not be enough, however, and appearances may deceive.

In education evaluation, the appearance of mathematized empirical rigor may be insufficient for several reasons. I mention but four.

First, it is at least arguable that value judgments can be justified by empirical standards, particularly when it is held (as it is held by many in our society) that the ultimate grounds and tests of value judgments are supernatural.

What empirical standards are available for evaluating an educational program which is justified by the claim that it benefits immortal souls and is sanctified by divine law? Some will agree with D. J. O'Connor (1957) when he says, "the problem of how to justify our value judgments is still an unsolved problem of philosophy. To realize this will save us from dogmatism and at the same time encourage us to go on looking for the answer" (p. 71).

Second, the rigor of any empirical investigation is owed, at least in part, to the conceptual adequacy of the theories and laws under which it proceeds. In education, particularly, conceptual foundations are a sloppy and controversial mess. To mention just a few basic terms, there are no clear, consensual definitions of 'education', 'learning', 'teaching', 'intelligence', 'emotion', 'aptitude', and 'knowledge' to guide rigorous investigation. To the extent that educational evaluation is dependent on poor conceptual bases, evaluative conclusions will be indeterminate--subject to interminable controversy. Equally important the absence of a common base of theory is a major barrier to development of a community of interest among practitioners.

Third, if application of mathematical models to educational processes depends upon precision in measurement then educational evaluation which brandishes mathematical models and vast arrays of numbers may be a house of cards--an impressive demonstration of patience and care, but insubstantial and flimsy, nonetheless. What determinate, consensual "units" do educational evaluators use to measure cognitive, affective, or psychomotor change, assuming for the moment that they agree on what those kinds of change are? Without such units, elaborate mathematization of education evaluation gives only an illusion of rigor and precision.

Fourth, specialists in education, like specialists in other areas, may create the illusion of a special and extraordinarily demanding conceptual base by resorting to an occupational code, a jargon. "Educationese" or "pedagese" has often been

criticized as inflated, but largely empty verbiage--a cheapened linguistic currency which drives sound currency from the marketplace of judgment.

A special language of educational evaluation, used by specialists to communicate among themselves, is no guarantee that evaluation rests on a special and extraordinarily demanding conceptual basis.

3. Is educational evaluation supported by standards which are enacted in the design and delivery of extended training programs, the selection of trainers and trainees, and certification of competence to practice? To the extent that training in educational evaluation occurs in university-based graduate programs, standards of sorts are involved in selection of trainees and trainers, and in the design and delivery of extended programs. Then, to the extent that these programs are evaluated by accrediting organizations as parts of schools and colleges of education, standards are general if not universal. Still, at present, there is no set of explicit, distinctive criteria for accrediting evaluator training programs, as such. Nor is there a set of criteria or an occupation-wide process for certifying practitioners. There is virtually nothing under law or control of a unified organization to prevent anybody from training so-called evaluators and certifying their competent right to the title.

4. Do evaluators have autonomy in practice? Personal responsibility? Does a base of standards support autonomy and personal responsibility? Answers here are mixed. While evaluators in general are given considerable latitude for expert judgment, few evaluation models promote independence in evaluation. Instead, they emphasize expertness in design and research methodology. Under a democratic, liberal ideology (House, 1978), they promote responsiveness and even subordination to clients' values. That some evaluators are employees in bureaucratic organizations and subject to direction from above is little more than a special case of subordination to external control.

Evaluators are held personally responsible, it seems to me, but more in the matter of design than implementation of design or "success" of evaluation. When designs cannot be implemented or implemented designs are inconclusive or non-productive, persons or conditions other than evaluators are likely to be blamed.

There may be very general agreements about standards in evaluation (see Note 1), but just as evaluators do not agree on a common conceptual base, they do not agree on particular methodologies and requisite skills. Current controversy over the merits of "experimental" and "naturalistic" methods in evaluation is a case in point. Thus there may be considerable disagreement about the characteristics and limits of competence. In these circumstances, some evaluators are almost sure to see any codification of standards to be an effort to impose a restrictive bias on evaluators' practices.

5. Is educational evaluation an occupation in which success is judged in terms of service to clients rather than self-serving interests of evaluators? Difficult to say! To the extent that educational evaluation has been fostered as contracted projects by corporations, foundations, and governmental agencies, considerable weight has been given to entreprenurial skills and bureaucratic gamesmanship, and personal and institutional prestige, privilege, and profit have been consequences if not expressed ends of action. In this situation, it is reasonable to question the motives of evaluators.

Contracted evaluation has been a many-million-dollar business over the past quarter-century, and if that money could talk, some suspect, it would speak of profits to evaluators and bureaucrats much more than of service to clients or benefits to the public at large.

Too, in evaluation, much like some medical research, activities may be designed more to improve practice than to serve the client. In effect, clients' programs can become experimental subjects, manipulated to serve investigators' ends over clients' welfare.

Still, there is clear evidence of purer motives of service to client and public welfare. Prominent evaluators have publicly bemoaned the failure of organized evaluation to benefit clients or improve education, and some have proposed steps (e.g., the "stakeholder" concept) to promote responsiveness to clients' concerns. The soon-to-be-published Standards for Evaluating Educational Programs (Note 1) may go far toward helping clients select trustworthy evaluators and to judge better the cost/benefit ratio of the evaluation services provided. Even federal officials have given a vote of confidence to the motives of evaluators by asking them to devise "ways to improve the utility and productivity of evaluation" (Note 2, p.2).

Finally, 6. Is educational evaluation represented by an organization which can speak as a united voice to secure jurisdiction, promote acceptance of special standards of practice, and enforce special standards as conditions of practice? At present, no. Although there are several organizations of evaluators and evaluators are represented in many educational organizations, there is no single organization I believe, that has the power to speak for educational evaluation. I know of none that is advocating exclusive jurisdiction or promoting licensure control or competency review boards, or the like.

Still, it is possible that publication of the Standards for Evaluating Educational Programs and its adoption by various prominent and influential educational organizations will prove to be a catalyst that accelerates a "professionalization" reaction among evaluators. Over time, the published Standards may encourage spin-offs: a certification or licensure code, criteria for accrediting training programs, standards in litigation, and the like.

However, whether the published Standards has these effects will depend on aggressive promotion by dedicated evaluators, support of powerful sponsors, and acceptance by society-at-large. In short, the future development of educational

evaluation as a profession depends on the values by which people judge the quality of evaluation theory and practice and the place of educational evaluation in the larger scheme of life--all a matter of standards.

Reference Notes

1. Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation. Standards for evaluation of educational programs, projects, and materials. Manuscript submitted for publication, 1979.

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